

The **Dental Assistant**

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A Monthly Publication

JANUARY, 1933

VOLUME II, NUMBER I

What Do You Read?

*"Tis knowledge we seek. With
knowledge comes success."*



If the dental assistant would intelligently perform the duties of her service to the dentist and patient, she should have a broad acquaintance with all matters that affect the dental profession as well as those that pertain directly to the practical phases of her work. Nothing will aid her more to understand what the dentist is trying to accomplish in health service, and the part she plays in rendering that service, than well directed reading. The following current articles are suggested:

Journal of the American Dental Association	December
"Organized Effort and Dentistry's Place"	Page 2156
"A Study of the Cost of Dental Education"	Page 2161
"A Missing Link" (Editorial)	Page 2190
"Sit Tight" (Editorial)	Page 2192
"Dental Therapeutics"	Page 2196
The Dental Cosmos	
"Dentistry's Opportunities and Responsibilities"	Page 1180
"Conduct of Practice"	Page 1193
"Team Work" (A. D. A. Association, President's Address, 1931)	Page 1204
"Value of the Dental Hygienist in the Office"	Page 1213
The Dental Survey	
"The Accusing Finger"	Page 41
"The Dilemma of the Inlay Boys"	Page 45
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"The Man With a Thousand Teeth"	Page 2194
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"Dental Caries and Its Prevention"	Page 913
The Dental Digest	November
"Dental Assistants and Secretaries"	Page 395
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The Dental Assistant

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VOLUME 2

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NUMBER 1

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Sterilization

By Dorothea B. Herman, Northfield, Minn.

Resume of Clinic presented before the Minnesota Dental Hygienists and Assistants Association at St. Paul, Minnesota, February 25, 1932, and the American Dental Assistants Association at Buffalo, New York, September 15, 1932.

DENTISTS are constantly being confronted with the idea that dental asepsis has not yet attained the perfection of surgical operating-room technique; and yet I believe it is generally agreed that dentists in general practice maintain as great a degree of asepsis as the average medical practitioner. However, I do not believe that dentists, as a whole, wish to be placed in this mediocre group. It seems to me that the blame is being placed unjustly on the dentist, as the dental assistant should be responsible for this very particular phase of dentistry. The correction of this criticism lies in the education of the dental assistant to the necessity of constant vigilance and in teaching her efficient methods of sterilization.

When the dental assistant makes her first appearance in an office, she is very liable not to know what the terms asepsis and sterilization mean. Some time ago I came in contact with an assistant who had spent a year in a dental office and still did not know what the word asepsis meant. The assistant is naturally desirous of learning all she can and depends upon observation in her first few days in an office to become familiar with methods used. I must say that the methods in many cases are very undesirable. And yet, can the dentist be blamed? Just how much preparation on sterilization does he receive in a dental college? I am sure you will all agree that it is very little. It is up to the assistant to make an intelligent study of sterilization, analyzing each method and making sure that the chain of asepsis is not broken.

The word "sterilization" is taken from

the Latin word "sterilis" meaning "barrenness" or "inability to produce." Therefore, when we speak of sterilization, we mean the destruction of all bacteria and spores. The word "asepsis" is taken from the Greek, "a" meaning "not" and "sepsis" meaning "putrefaction." Therefore, when we use the term "asepsis" we mean freedom from pus-producing bacteria. The assistant must strive to use methods which will assure her of absolute destruction of both the spore-bearing and the non-spore-bearing bacteria.

It would be impossible to mention all the methods of sterilization which might be used, and so I have chosen the methods which I consider most practical and efficient for maintaining asepsis in general practice. These methods are:

1. Boiling of instruments.
2. Exposure of dry materials to live steam under pressure.
3. Immersion of instruments not subject to boiling in an approved antiseptic solution.

The difference in composition of instruments and materials used in surgery and general practice has given rise to various methods of sterilization. Sterilization by heat is a great deal more efficient than sterilization by immersion in chemicals and should be used as far as possible.

Boiling of Instruments

All instruments whose composition will not be harmed by water should be placed in this group. A simple technique which eliminates all possibility of injury or rust may be developed.

1. Instruments should be immediately scrubbed with a brush in soap and water to eliminate the possibility of stains from blood clots or from other foreign matter. It is very important to see that the crevices are well cleaned out with the brush.
 2. The instruments should then be placed in the sterilizer, in which the water is already boiling, and boiled vigorously for ten minutes. A greater length of time is not advisable, as it may prove harmful to the fine edges.
 3. At the end of this ten-minute period of sterilization the entire tray should be lifted out and the instruments rolled upon a sterile towel.
 4. The sterile towel can be picked up from underneath and the instruments may be dried without touching them and placed in the cabinet.
 5. For a complete technique, resterilization before use is indicated.
3. If not quite such drastic treatment is needed, fill your sterilizer with water, add vinegar, and allow to stand over night. In the morning rinse it out well and refill it with water. These procedures will not be necessary, however, if you give your sterilizer the same care that you would give utensils in the home.

Exposure of Dry Materials to Live Steam Under Pressure

In the opinion of some it is not necessary to sterilize dry materials. They feel that because these materials come in sealed, sterile packages, they remain so. In the first place, how can we be sure they are sterile and remain so after being opened? They are exposed to dust and air and are in danger of contamination. In surgery it is wrong to assume anything, and therefore I advocate autoclaving for all dry materials. We have both the spore-bearing and the non-spore-bearing type of bacteria to contend with in surgery, and through experiment it has been found that both of these types are destroyed by subjecting the material to live steam under a pressure of fifteen pounds for one-half hour. As a result of this discovery, the autoclave has become a very necessary article in a dental office and is so highly developed that it is very simple to operate. A conscientious assistant will make an autoclave available if she has none in her own office.

An individual packet for each patient assures the doctor of absolute sterility, and the psychological effect upon the patient is great. Small squares of material, preferably unbleached muslin, can be cut, and supplies such as gauze, cotton, sponges, and any other articles the doctor may need, sufficient for one operation, may be gathered together and pinned into a little packet. A dozen or so of these packets should be autoclaved each morning, left in the autoclave until

Extra Precautions:

1. To prevent rusting, boil just ten minutes—no more and no less.
2. Do not allow the instruments to stand after boiling but dry them immediately.
3. A drop of liquid albolene placed in the sterilizer each day will remove stains and also keep forceps oiled.

Care of Sterilizer:

1. The water in the sterilizer should be removed at the end of each day. This will eliminate rust formation or a formation of scale.
2. If a deposit of lime forms in the bottom of the sterilizer, boil a solution of ten per cent hydrochloric acid in the sterilizer for ten minutes. Be sure to rinse well with water following this procedure. This will loosen all scale.

the patient is seated in the chair, and then removed and placed on the tray. Other dry materials should be packed in neat bundles and autoclaved. Keeping these packs in the autoclave until used assures one that they have not become contaminated.

If one is using an autoclave belonging to some one else, a greater number of bundles must be sterilized each time and a clean, tight place provided for storage.

Gauze packs may be purchased already made up, but the assistant can be more economical by purchasing gauze by the yard and making up her own. In that way she can make them just the size the doctor wishes. They may be made with a cotton padding or without, as desired.

Rubber goods will not stand the same temperature as dry materials, and therefore fifteen minutes in the autoclave will be sufficient for rubber. The gloves are placed in envelopes which are made of double thickness of unbleached muslin made to form two pockets which fold over on each other. This envelope is then placed in another piece of muslin to assure sterility of the envelope. In this way the gloves may be removed by

the surgeon without danger of contamination.

Instruments which are not subject to boiling must be immersed for at least ten minutes in an approved antiseptic solution. I wish to emphasize the word "approved." Some of us are willing to accept any germicide placed on the market or recommended without any study of it whatsoever. I am sure that if we went to our druggists and looked up the properties and power of some of the antiseptics commonly used, we would receive a great surprise. Laboratory tests and findings may be received from the company manufacturing the germicide. There are two germicides on the market that fulfill the highest qualifications.

The instruments must be clean before placing them in the germicide. After a ten-minute period has elapsed, they should be immediately removed and dried. Some germicides do not require drying. It is necessary that the entire instrument be immersed.

The assistant must keep in mind that efficient sterilization will control infection to a great extent and will mean safety to the doctor and to his patient.

Who—What—When—Why—Where?

By Susie Sexton, New York, N. Y.

A VERY successful woman novelist once wrote amusingly about the hostess who rushed up to her after a party and gushed: "You know, I have just been talking to my husband and I told him not to worry one bit. We have had tremendous losses in the stock market, but as I tell George, if worse comes to the worst I'll just sit down and write a best seller that will put us on our feet again. I've read everything you ever wrote. And if you can do it I know

I can. There's nothing to it." Pleasantries such as this have given many a writer the first fitting for a straight-jacket. Stepping into the form of Ellen Glasgow or Mary Roberts Rinehart is not quite as simple as this feminine optimist imagined, as she discovered no doubt when attempting to produce a Nobel Prize winner. But her words were, after all, a compliment to the writer. For any author who achieves a best seller has depicted characters known

in every country highway as well as along Broadway. And the epigrams that reach a wide circulation are those we recognize as our own thoughts still unexpressed.

Writing, for the successful author, or even for the one who has not yet achieved fame, is one of the most exacting of professions. It is not at all like needlepoint—something to be picked up or laid aside at will. Years of grinding study, intimate knowledge and close observation of humanity, a liberal education, travel, from four to eight hours uninterrupted work every day in the year—including Sundays and holidays—also a tremendous capacity for salesmanship and the ability to commercialize the product after it has been finished, are only a few of the requirements if you wish to duplicate the triumphs of Eugene O'Neil, Sinclair Lewis or Edna St. Vincent Millay. In these modern days, however, it is quite possible to write well without becoming a professional writer. Particularly if you are a specialist in some chosen line. Turning out a good workmanlike bit of composition is quite possible for any human being with an average education and something to say. Many outstanding stars of sport—tennis, golf, basketball and football—are amateurs. Helen Wills is an artist by profession as well as the greatest of women tennis players. Law did not keep Bobby Jones from blazing as the most brilliant of golf stars. Both Miss Wills and Mr. Jones have written much about their favorite pastimes. And what is true in sports is also true in the professions. If you excel in your own life's work you will have something of interest to give to others.

When the editor of your own magazine asks you for a contribution do you go into a nose-dive and whisper in quavering tones: "But I never have any ideas. Nothing ever happens to me that I could write about." Do you remember the disgruntled surgeon in the motion picture of "Grand Hotel" who sat

around the lobby all day and every night moaning "Nothing ever happens here?" Yet the novelist and dramatist had discovered love, tragedy, theft, murder, in fact all the highlights of life and death playing over the doctor's life from every angle.

No one, to be sure, can give you an exact formula for acquiring exclusive rights to an idea. An idea famine is nothing more than dearth of observation or paralysis of the brain cells. Take off your blinders. Think about everything you see and hear. Ideas are bound to bloom even in the desert. A chance word or two overheard when you are thinking about nothing in particular may prove the germ of a masterpiece. "Yes," you protest, "but I work in a dental office. There is nothing romantic or picturesque or exciting about dentistry, I can tell you. I would go mad if I did not play bridge, or the banjo, or take singing lessons at night. Doctor's patients are a tiresome lot and so exacting." No doubt. But pageantry and vivid backgrounds are not essential to any writer. England's present poet laureate is said to have been a bartender in New York long before the King began to pore over his poetry. And one of the most fascinating bits of fiction of late years was the narrative of an old family doctor and his experiences with very ordinary patients indeed in a daily round of visits extending over many routine years. A dentist's office, or any place else through which the world tramps in an endless march, must be full of stories if you have the eyes to see them.

Let us suppose you are in a dental office in the Forties near Fifth Avenue in New York. Operatic tenors, movie stars, captains of industry enter your door to have a tooth pulled or an abscess treated. Here you have an inexhaustible source of ideas. Why not write an article on "Human Nature in the Dentist's Chair." Study the countless types which come and go. Compare and contrast.

There are thousands of pretty girls who might be described as "young, slim, pretty, with an alabaster skin," but would you be able to pick such a girl out of a theatre crowd? Certainly not. Because there is nothing distinctive about that description. "But, if you said that she wore a green Watteau hat perched on platinum curls and had a three-cornered scar on one cheek you might fare better. You know Oliver Cromwell is said to have remarked that he wished some one would paint him "warts and all." That is a valuable truth for writers. Never omit the outstanding features of your subjects. Only in this way will they stand out as individuals instead of puppets. How does a songbird act with a toothache? Are masters of finance cowards when they see the forceps? Are women braver than men? Perhaps you are in a small town instead of New York. Why not interview your local dentists about new discoveries or methods, and other phases of their work. Character sketches are always interesting. What suggestions occur to you that would help other dental assistants? How do you improve your own work?

Some day I intend to write an article on tooth extraction among the ancients. How did Cleopatra brush her teeth and with what? Did Hannibal tie a string to the door when he tried to get rid of a pesky molar? Who invented toothpaste and mouth wash? And what demoniac genius invented that drilling instrument? Humanity with its mouth open is, after all, one of the most diverting of earthly spectacles, wherever you find it. A few nights ago I heard over the radio the news that a dentist on the Coast had sued a young lady who chewed with her new bridgework before she paid. The dentist thought she should have paid before she chewed. What caused this predicament? Why was the young lady in such haste to chew? Was she very hungry or excessively vain? Was her objective a new position, a husband, or a

movie test? What complications resulted from the dentist's cruelty? A good yarn developed from any angle.

One story that always fascinated me in my childhood was that about the newly-arrived millionaire who had two enormous diamonds set in his front teeth as a token that he had arrived. This, it still seems to me, was the height of elegance. And I was heartbroken when I learned that this celebrity had fallen upon evil days and had to pawn the diamonds. Imagine the void. At a later date during a period of depression in the Sunday department of a New York newspaper, I was sent one sultry summer evening to cover the doings of a municipal court. A poor harrassed woman who sold newspapers to the after-theatre crowds in Times Square was among the prisoners. The law was against her for several reasons. For instance, she was intensely fond of negro spirituals and had formed the habit of slipping into the religious services of ebony folk to listen to the sweet music. Although a few years later spirituals were the rage of the country among rich and poor alike, this poor woman was considered slightly demented. Also she was inordinately fond of cats. This did not help any. A fellow reporter assisted me in getting her released. Hunted and harried, she may have been part lunatic, but she was harmless, self-supporting and had a bank account and insurance. She left us at Brooklyn Bridge to go to her uptown home. Casually she mentioned that she wished she had her bridgework. "Why don't you wear it all the time?" I asked, as I had never seen her without a gap in her mouth that resembled the Holland Tunnel. "Well, you see," was the astonishing answer, "I'd always wanted a bracelet so one day I took out the bridgework and one of the neighbors made me a bangle." Don't you imagine O. Henry might have made something out of this situation?

Yes, I am sure Drama reclines many times a day in the dentist's chair dis-

guised behind a swollen cheek or a jumping toothache, so, you will certainly have many ideas for articles. But what to do with them then. Treat them just like one of Doctor's patients. First make a chart of the subject, noting all outstanding features—molars, centrals and bicusps—which should have attention. Then start to drill, mentally toward the nerve. Thus you will put your teeth into your subject. "But I do not know where to begin," is the usual cry of most inexperienced writers. Begin anywhere. But begin by all means as soon as possible. You do not put on your hat the first thing when you step out of bed in the morning. Or feel that you cannot start dressing until the bonnet is perched at a devastating angle. The roof is the last thing put into place on a new building. Sculptors have to build a foundation for their statues before they can get the head in its proper relation to the rest of the body. So do not be worried if you cannot think of a brilliant opening paragraph. Leave that until later. And do not—of all things—sit around waiting for *Inspiration* to tap you on the shoulder. Inspiration never keeps an appointment. Hard work is much more dependable. Build up a reserve in your mind by study, reading and observation. You will have a rich storehouse to call upon when you need a first rate idea.

My early training as a writer was obtained on a large newspaper in Chicago. The first lesson of my career consisted of memorizing the five W's—"Who, what, when, why, where. All of these it was necessary to answer intelligently and completely in the first paragraph or so of every news story. Newspaper readers are hurried souls. They demand concentrated information, all of the news at first glance. If time permits reading the rest of the story well and good. Otherwise it does not matter. Daily and Sunday journalism is far removed from magazine writing. But some of the lessons of journalistic days have a life-time

value for the professional writer. I have never abandoned the "five W's." They are important to every story. Although only the journalist crowds them into the first paragraph. So—mind your W's as well as your P's and Q's.

When you start work on an article there are two things I recommend as aids to the typewriter. They may or may not help you. One is a large supply of yellow paper. The other a stack of small white cards, such as are used in every card index system. The white cards will build an excellent foundation. Sit quietly at your typewriter. Consider your subject from every angle. What is the first thing about it that occurs to you? Jot it down on one of the white cards. Do not go into elaborate detail. The merest skeleton of the thought will do. That first thought will lead to another. This, too, goes on a white card. And so on. Do not try to write an article in one afternoon. Think it over for several days or longer. As you ride on the bus, in the subway, sit through a matinee, or sing psalms in church, new thoughts may confront you at unexpected moments. Jot them down at random in a small notebook or scrap of paper. When you reach home transfer them to the white cards. Even the most baffling of mysteries can be solved by anyone who has ALL the facts in the case. And almost any subject in the world can be made fascinating if you tell the whole truth about it. I have on my desk an article by Rose Macauley called "Alone." It appeared in the Forum years ago. Who has not wished to be alone? And most of us have felt the same sentiments expressed by Miss Macauley. But how many could express it as perfectly or as humorously as she does, because she has noted the smallest detail of thought and expression? It is the missing link that is never found which puts a mystery into the "unsolved" catalogue. The facts a writer fails to present often make the story a failure. Having filled your white

cards try a little literary solitaire. Spread them out on your desk and build your story in logical outline. Make the striking points in your arguments stand out. Subordinate less important thought. Be clear, concise and convincing. Be specific. Make your story a succession of concrete facts and illustrations rather than a hodge podge of vain conjecture. As children we like the books with the most pictures. As adults we prefer the photographic literary style.

Several years ago "Everybody's" magazine sent me out to Lexington, Kentucky, to interview Miss Elizabeth Daingerfield, most famous breeder of horses in the world of women. She had charge of Man o' War, Morvich and others. I drove out to Miss Daingerfield's farm and spent a delightful day with her. I saw her at home and at her work. But she told me little about Miss Daingerfield. And if your business is interviewing celebrities, one of the first facts brought home to you is the fact that the great talk little. I could not have written an acceptable magazine article from that meeting. But I did not stop there. I went back to Lexington, visiting newspaper offices, photographers, relatives and friends. I talked to train porters and railway officials. Then I came back to New York and spent days finding people who knew this remarkable woman—movie executives, camera men, owners of racing stables. From each I obtained a different view of Miss Daingerfield. The article was a success. Therefore I suggest walking all around your subject, not once but many times. Regard it in many different angles—full face, profile and three-quarters. Find out its best as well as its weakest arguments. If your subject is one that permits research spend several days or a few hours at the library digging out facts.

When you are busy writing try to use a variety of words. So much of our vo-

cabulary is hackneyed and worn. Yet the dictionary is a sizable book. But unemployment is a chronic state with a large percentage of the English language. Get a book of synonyms if you find the dictionary too bulky. Dress up your words. Your style will gain freshness and novelty. Be simple in expression. This does not mean silly. A clear, direct style in writing is better than flowery ambiguities. Sprinkle the whole with a little humor. It will season it and make it more palatable. Do not be afraid to write your story over many times. Polish and trim words and sentences, until they read smoothly and express your own individuality. And when all is said and done consider your beginnings. Try to express the main theme in a few simple and unhackneyed phrases. Or take one feature of your article and elaborate it. But get away from the commonplace.

From memory I am quoting a story I wrote at one time about the fashion for wearing cotton frocks. At the time the cotton growers were boosting business with the slogan "Buy a bale of cotton." My story might have started this way: "Leading dressmakers throughout the country declare that cotton frocks will be the vogue during the coming summer, etc., etc." But there was nothing startling about this. So I wrote: "Wear a bale of cotton. That is the latest change that has been rung upon the popular slogan by Fashion."

There is a difference.

Susie Sexton is a well-known writer formerly on the staff of the "Chicago Tribune" and "Herald" and contributes to the "American Magazine," "Everybody's," "Women's Home Companion," "Photoplay," "Screenland," etc., as well as prominent newspapers throughout the United States. She is a member of the Newspaper Womens Club of New York City, the National Arts Club and The Woman Pays Club.

Demonstrator, Detailman, and Dental Assistant

By Fred L. Brophy, Santa Monica, Cal.

THE ever increasing demand made on the dentist's time by salesmen and women offering every conceivable article and proposition under the sun, has so interfered with those solely identified with the dental profession that some definite plan should be established whereby those actively engaged in bringing new preparations, ideas and technics to the profession may be given more consideration than the casual caller.

What does the detailman or demonstrator expect of the dental assistant?

Firstly, sufficient time to explain the reason for his call (and at this point may I add that if all dental dealers would first ascertain from the detailman or demonstrator exactly what is to be said to the dentist, together with the time required to complete the interview before allowing them to accompany their salesmen, much valuable time would be saved by the dentist, who in many instances is obliged to listen to a demonstrator who not only does not know his product, but lacks the training required to present the subject intelligently and in the shortest possible time).

Secondly. When the subject or preparation requires a demonstration or information pertaining to special technique, the privilege of presenting the subject to the doctor personally — provided of course he is not operating at the time or has patients waiting.

Thirdly. In the absence of the dentist, the cooperation of the dental assistant in bringing to his attention upon his return, such information and samples as may have been left with her.

This is what the demonstrator or detailman expects of the dental assistant, but is not always accorded such favors, and it is with a view of creating a more

definite understanding between all parties concerned that these lines are written. True, all demonstrators and detailmen are not alike, which is also the case with the dental assistants, yet I believe there is a common ground on which all may meet for the furtherance of one another's cause and the betterment of dentistry as a whole. I reiterate that too much time is given the casual caller who's mission hasn't the remotest connection with the dental profession, and I regard such as poachers in a field where only those actively engaged in lines kindred to dentistry should be permitted during office hours.

The following suggestions are those from the manufacturer's point of view and are respectfully submitted in the hope that with the assistance of the dentist and dental assistants, a more comprehensive plan may be developed which will not only conserve the dentist's time but permit those offering new preparations, ideas, and technics to present their wares along more systematic lines than those practiced today.

Upon entering the reception room the dental assistant should inquire of the caller whether his visit is of a business or professional nature, if informed that it is a business call, she should then inquire whether or not it pertains to dentistry, and in this connection may I say that I have seen many gate crashers reach the private office by claiming to possess a most important and personal message for the dentist, yet who refused to divulge the slightest inkling to the assistant as to the nature of his business for fear of her refusal to permit him to see the doctor. Unless the caller is willing to state the exact nature of his or her business they are not worthy of consid-

eration. The average dental assistant has received instruction from her employer covering callers under such headings as Insurance, Real Estate, Magazines and Advertising, etc., and can readily dismiss such visitors with very little loss of time. As previously mentioned, we merely seek the privilege of presenting our story, yet, in many cases are denied this favor by some over zealous assistant who jumps from the sublime to the ridiculous as one did recently by announcing "I'm sure the doctor wouldn't be interested" even before I had an opportunity to open my mouth;—the fortunate arrival of the dentist saved the day, resulting not only in his keen interest in one of my products, but the receipt of his profound thanks for having brought it to his attention. Thank heaven there are not very many of that assistant's type.

Demonstrating and detailing are usually carried on over a given territory such as by town, city, or separate building, so that, should the demonstrator or detailman call at a time when the dentist is operating or has patients waiting, he will gladly return later at a time most convenient to the doctor if permitted to rather than pass up the contact. Be sure and get all the particulars from the caller before presenting the matter to the dentist, for example, if the party calling is demonstrating a new denture material, one which the dentist has never used or possibly heard of, secure the name of the material, price, any literature describing the material and especially a sample case which all demonstrators carry, and take them into the laboratory, operating room or private office merely asking "Would you be interested in talking to a man regarding this new denture material, who says he will gladly run a test case for you at your convenience." If the dentist is not interested simply tell the demonstrator so, but don't take a message to the dentist along such lines as, "There's a man outside who sells or makes some-

thing or other for plates, do you want to see him?"

Remember, detailmen and demonstrators are indispensable to the dental profession and are solely responsible for bringing all the latest preparations, ideas and technics to the dentist, and are always willing to conduct a clinic or furnish samples or information at any hour most convenient to the dentist and only ask in return that they be given an opportunity to "speak their little piece." The demonstrator or detailman who knows his business is just as anxious to save the dentist's time as the dentist himself, fully appreciating the fact that the dentist earns absolutely nothing when his hands are idle. He prepares his presentation in the fewest possible words and his demonstration within the shortest possible time. Whether the product be alloy, cotton rolls, sticky wax or articulating paper, the demonstrator has the latest information direct from the factory and is seeking with your cooperation an opportunity of presenting his side of the story to your employer.

Save the dentist valuable time by eliminating the non-essential caller, many of whom could be dismissed without even answering the bell, by placing a small notice on the operating room door to the effect that,

INTERVIEWS DURING OFFICE HOURS, 8 TO 12, 1 TO 5 P. M., ARE CONFINED TO THOSE PERTAINING TO DENTISTRY ONLY.

Dentalmen confine their calls strictly to dentists and dental laboratories and feel they are entitled to more consideration than those whose only interest in the dentist is to sell him everything from silk sox to cemetery lots, mainly because he has allowed himself to be classed among the "easy marks" through his utter disregard for the value of his time.

The Dental Assistant As a Housekeeper

By Clara E. Smith, Nashville, Tenn.

IT is surprising to enumerate how many of the qualifications of a good dental assistant are the same as those of a good housekeeper in the home. When we point out some of the varied duties of our every day work I believe that we can convince our housekeeping sisters that our jobs are nearly parallel.

Cleaning is probably the first thing that engages our attention every morning. Whether we do it all ourselves or can have some of it done, we must look after it just the same. I believe that proper cleaning materials and tools are a good investment and that frequent cleaning, wiping all surfaces with clean cloths each day, makes this work less arduous. The daily cleaning must be supplemented by periodic cleaning of shelves and closets, and we must have the twice a year cleaning when we send rugs and drapes to the cleaners, have upholstery looked after and have somebody in to do the woodwork and perhaps the walls. Then we have the care of the instruments, engines and various electrical appliances in use in our offices. It is a good policy to keep everything in repair, even to the immediate replacement of a single screw. We each can find what care is needed for the things in our own office from the dental supply salesman. The ordering of supplies is usually our responsibility. We should be sure to replenish our supplies before they are entirely used up. If we have storage room we can save our office money by ordering some things in reasonably large amounts. In this we must be guided by the amount we use in a given time, whether or not they will deteriorate, and if the dentist still likes the brand we have been getting. Linens may be bought to good advantage at the first of the year and mid-summer sales.

We must always keep our cabinets re-

plenished with gauze squares, cotton pledgets, applicators and many other things that are constantly being used up by the dentist in his daily operations at the chair. It is also a good idea to keep a reserve supply, so that we may never run out. It is necessary to the smooth running of the office for these things, as well as the instruments, to always be kept in the same place in the cabinet, so that to get at them requires no thought for either the operator or the assistant. In other words we must be orderly housekeepers, and while we do all of these things, we must be careful of our personal appearance, keeping our uniforms fresh looking and our hands in good condition. No amount of apologizing or explaining the sort of work we do will excuse smudgy uniforms or bad looking hands, and to keep them nice looking requires continual and persistent care. Above all, as hostess of the office we must adapt ourselves to our surroundings, be courteous and pleasant with our co-workers, and gracious to every visitor.

These aforementioned duties we set forth as our housekeeping tasks, but we have bookkeeping, correspondence, chair assisting, X-ray and laboratory work as a few of our other chores in our daily routine. To keep up a regime like this we must keep ourselves in good physical condition. It is important that we wear comfortable shoes while we work and that we arrange in so far as possible for our work to be distributed so that no one day will be too crowded. We, as all other office workers, should exercise in the open air, getting as much sun as possible, especially in the winter. It is often necessary for us to sacrifice a little pleasure in order to get the proper amount of rest at night, but this we must get as well as being careful to have a wholesome diet at all times.

The Dental Assistant and the Child Patient

By Mabel C. Clark, Newark, N. J.

President of the Northern N. J. D. A. Association

ONE of the greatest services that the dental assistant can render to the dentist is the gaining of the good will and confidence of the child patient. She not only helps him to build up this class of patient, which becomes his future adult clientele, but she encourages the child to submit to operations which materially affect his health and comfort.

The dental assistant should approach the child from an entirely different angle than the adult. When the child enters the office she should attempt to immediately engage his attention by bringing herself down to his level, discarding a professional attitude. This can be done in various ways. A bowl or two of fish in the room seldom fails to make subject matter for conversation, also children's story books, games and attractive toys. The sole idea being to disengage the child's thoughts from the dental work to be done. Sometimes she may find it advantageous to separate the child from the adult accompanying it. She may invite the child into the business office and offer pencils and crayons together with paper to occupy the few minutes that may be necessary before examination, although, if possible a child should never be kept waiting. The child may also be taken into the laboratory and permitted to witness some of the mysteries thereof. Thus the child forgets the purpose of the visit to the dentist while centering its attention and interest in other matters. After the assistant has spent a few minutes alone with a child and has been able to make a careful study of his reaction to the surroundings, she can advise the dentist whether or not it is best to make the visit just social, permitting the two to become acquainted before any dental work is started.

The assistant can also render a valuable service by observing the manner in which the parent handles the child during a visit, and in a tactful way may explain to them their mistakes and in this way also educate them as to the importance of the visit to the child. So often parents are found dragging a screaming child into the office. This type patient is the most difficult to approach and every effort must be made on the part of the assistant to break the feeling of terror which the child will hold against the dental office and all connected with it. Here the assistant may again help by advising against the use of force or coercion, fearful threats, and extravagant promises of rewards. Usually in a case of this kind it is well for the child to meet the dentist in the play room or business office, away from the operating room and after talking with the child for a few minutes, make another appointment. It is best to waste an appointment and gain the good will of the child, as this will pay for itself many times over. The assistant should be very proud of each case where an unwilling child is changed into a pleasant, well-behaved, happy patient. She should never permit herself to get into the frame of mind that an unwilling child is a nuisance. They can all be handled. True, it takes longer to conquer some than it does others but they all eventually become interested if the assistant silently guides them without their realizing it.

There are times when the dentist himself becomes annoyed with the behavior of a child; here too, the assistant must be on the alert, it is her job to note this and attempt diplomatically to convert him. Reminding him that some of

(Continued on Page 13)

Germs

I SAY, Mike old amigo, did you have a Merry Christmas? I've missed your smiling countenance—thought you had gone to Miami for a change." "What would I be doing in your army?—there ain't goin' to be any more war." "I didn't say 'my army,'" I said Miami—Miami, Florida, where the Doc when he has the mazuma, goes for a bit of quiet relaxation, golf, sun tan, deep sea fishing, and . . . please don't interrupt, don't you know that it is impolite? You're not interested in scandal. What do you mean scandal? O-o-o-h, you thought I was going to speak of moonlight sails and pyjama parties and cute little . . . O. K. we'll change the subject. What do you think are the ten most beautiful words in the English language?" "S-o-o, Spiro old timer, you too have been reading about that Mr. Bunk and his settin' the litterati by the ears with this question, eh, wot? Well, if you must know, I think the ten most beautiful words in the English language are: Courage, Kindness, Undersanding, Helpful, Unselfish, Co-operation, Friendship, Love, Loyalty and Service." "Them are grand words Mike. I was talking with R. U. A. Germ yesterday, and he said the ten most beautiful words to him was "There ain't goin' to be no more sterilizers or sterilizing"; but let me tell you what the Doc said. He said that the ten loveliest words to him was from a patient, to wit "Here's that Hundred I've owed you for two years." The D. A. says that when the Doc says "Beginning with next week you get a ten dollar raise" those words are music to her ears. Some folks like butter others don't, some eat pork others like ham, which came first the chicken or the egg? You don't care, you don't like eggs! But what has that to do with did you have a Merry Christmas? as I was saying. You did! The D. A. must have been on a vacation. No? She was fired you say, the Doc had to buy his wife a new car for a Christmas present; how nice, but what had that to do with the D. A.? O-o-o-o-h, he had to economize somewhere, he did, and . . . well, we should worry, there'll be lots of nice cosey places for us to park when I come to see you. The patients don't like it? Piffle! there ain't none to speak of anyway. Yes, I've heard that old wag "Penny wise, pound foolish"—well, amigo, so long, see you next year.

Yours for keeps, carbolic acid notwithstanding,

SPIRO KEET.

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P. S. Hope 1933 is a hum dinger. Don't forget to make lots of good resolutions so you can have the fun of bustin' 'em all to pieces. HAPPY NEW YEAR.

(Continued from Page 12)

his best and most loyal patients are those who have visited him since childhood. She must learn to sense the doctor's temperament and handle him in such a way that he will be patient and forbearing with any unwillingness that may arise on the part of the child. If she realizes that the dentist is over-anxious to accomplish something that can best be done at some future date, she should, in

a quiet way, convey the thought to him. In this manner, she will save both the doctor and the child from unnecessary weariness. Thus we see how the dental assistant can act as the peacemaker between the parent and child, and the dentist and the child. Resting upon her shoulders is one of the great tasks of the office, converting the unmanageable and unwilling child patient, thus laying the cornerstone of the foundation of a good practice.

The Dental Assistant

A Monthly Publication

A Journal for Dental Assistants Devoted to Their Interests and Education

All communications for publication must be in the hands of the Editor on or before the tenth of the month previous to publication. Publication of statements, opinions, or other data is not to be understood as an endorsement of same by the magazine or its publishers.

NEW YORK CITY, JANUARY, 1933

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

A Happy New Year

AT THE threshold of this New Year—we greet you and we wish for you in abundant measure, "Strength for your work, peace for your path, and friends for your fireside." Hail to 1933! Farewell to 1932. For many, the past year has been a trying one. There have been disappointments, dull days, anxiety, increased responsibilities, and it has seemed at times as though our work and efforts were all in vain. ENTHUSIASM is contagious, and so is DESPONDENCY. Both are a state of mind. It was Henry Chester who said "Enthusiasm is the greatest asset in the world. It beats money, and power, and influence. Single handed the enthusiast convinces and dominates where wealth accumulated by a small army of workers would scarcely raise a tremor of interest. Enthusiasm tramples over prejudice and opposition, spurns inaction, storms the citadel of its object, and like an avalanche overwhelms and engulfs all obstacles. It is nothing more or less than FAITH in action. . . . Faith and initiative rightly combined, remove mountainous barriers and achieve the unheard of and the miraculous." Such is the value of enthusiasm.

DESPONDENCY is the greatest liability in the world. It crushes the spirit, slays enthusiasm, makes a weakling of the strong, kills initiative. If you think you are beaten—you are. If you think you dare not—you don't. If you'd like to win, but you think you can't, it's a cinch you won't. If you think you'll lose—you're lost. For out in the world we find, that success begins with a fellow's will. It's all in the state of mind." We must cease to be "SORRY" for ourselves if we are to help re-create times of happiness and plenty. The man or woman who hugs unto himself a feeling of "self pity" are unpleasant spectacles, they add nothing to the ultimate good of those around them. Instead of wasting time and energy in vain repining, and blaming the world for their "hard luck" they should be making every effort to accomplish deeds of greater usefulness and service.

If you are a member of a dental assistant's society (or a dental society), resolve to rally more earnestly than ever before to its support. In the friendships and comradeships of your fellows you will find renewed enthusiasm and courage, and in the interest you bring to its activities you will lose much of your spirit of doubt or dismay. Cheer up! the world is young, its needs are incessant. It yearns for beauty,

laughter, romance, loyalty, service, and love. Life is good to live because of its constant opportunities for better things. The world is eager for the things you can do, and your BEST work has not yet been done. Each day is a new day, even as this is a New Year.

JULIETTE A. SOUTHARD.

Ideals and Nature

IDEALS are thoughts belonging to every individual in every walk of life. While the world may seem a spectacle with ever changing scenes, something within us is stable, and one can enumerate some special views as to the effect of culture upon the human mind, so may we for a moment attempt to analyse the ideal in poetry and the ideal in philosophy.

The poet communicates his thoughts on an elevated plane. He may write upon subjects no different from what we know, but they are raised to a higher degree and set before our eyes in a new light filled with beauty. It may be said that we conform thoughts to things, while the poet conforms things to thoughts. One esteems nature as rooted and fast, the other as fluid, impressing his being and giving impetus to his imagination. It was said by a great writer that "Shakespeare possessed the power of subordinating nature for the purposes of expression beyond all poets." We find through extensive reading that the work of a poet involves his very soul. The poet animates nature with his own thoughts, he is unlike the philosopher who propounds theory, in that he expresses fancies. There is nothing strange in nature, accidental, unsupported. Nature we know never moves by jumps but by steady advancement.

We must not become impatient and expect to learn all there is to know in one day. It is natural for us to wish for food, sleep, and society, but there must be a strong desire for knowledge if we are to bring out the undiscovered regions of thought. If there is a desire to live with more knowledge and power, it is because life, knowledge, and power are good for us, and we are the natural depositors for these gifts. Let it be remembered that the soul never grows old, and that the mind is ready at all times for new motives, new companions, new conditions, and new ideals.

Dental Assistants everywhere—are not our aims like those of the poet and the philosopher? Are we not striving to follow high ideals, and are we not grouping together to learn the truths of our profession as well as its beauties? Indeed we are, and this is made possible through our splendid societies. Think well of your ideals and strive for the best.

FLORENCE D. CLARK.



Question Box

ELIZABETH V. SHOEMAKER
Kew Plaza, Kew Gardens, N. Y.



- Q. In expressing excess mercury from amalgam what should be used?
- A. There is a wide difference of opinion as to whether this should be done with gauze, chamois skin, or one's bare fingers. Please be guided by your employer's wishes in the matter.
- Q. Is it difficult for me to remove dies set in plaster out of the metal rings. As I am just starting this work and know very little about the laboratory, possibly I have omitted some part of the procedure or have not received instructions for same.
- A. Metal rings should be clean and dry inside and out, then covered on the inside with a coat of vaseline or oil before pouring the plaster into them.
- Q. What is meant by Infiltration and Conductive Anesthesia?
- A. Infiltration Anesthesia is the method of rendering terminal (ends) or peripheral (outside) endings of the sensory nerves insensible to pain, by injecting an anesthetizing solution into a localized area. Conductive Anesthesia is the method of producing insensibility in a part by blocking the nerve trunk or trunks which supply that part, by injecting a local anesthetizing solution at a point DISTANT from the field of operation.
- Q. Does it harm a platinum needle to heat it in a flame?
- A. Passing a platinum needle through the BLUE part of a flame does no harm, but allowing the needle to come in contact with the YELLOW or WHITE part of a flame causes the needle to become carbonized, and should be avoided.
- Q. Is a short sleeved uniform permissible at a clinic?
- A. Nothing but a long sleeved uniform should be worn, with white hose, shoes, and a cap, and no jewelry displayed.
- Q. Please give me a definition of Periodontist.
- A. One who corrects traumatic (pounding) occlusion, and who treats all abnormal conditions of the periodontal MEMBRANE and gums.
- Do You Know That — Orthodontia models can be given a marble like surface by dipping them in boiling sterin. Use in a double boiler, have models perfectly dry, leave for five minutes, remove with pliers, allow to cool, then rub briskly with a soft cloth for a beautiful gloss. Ordinary unscented talcum powder rubbed on models will also improve their appearance.
- Do You Know That—In California the Better Business Bureau states that custom made dentures are liable to attachment if not paid for?

We invite our readers to send in questions and suggestions. Personal replies will be sent upon receipt of self addressed and stamped envelope. Data must be received the 8th of the month for the issue of the succeeding month.

Educational and Efficiency Society

FOR DENTAL ASSISTANTS
1st District, N. Y., Inc.

MEETING

Tuesday, January 10th, 1933, 7:45 P. M., Hotel Pennsylvania, 33rd Street and 7th Avenue, New York City.

PROGRAM

Speaker

Dr. B. W. Weinberger, Librarian of the First District Dental Society

Topic

"The Development of Dentistry and the Entrance of Dental Assistants into the Profession."

CLINIC CLUB

As a new venture, beginning with the January meeting, the Clinic Club will combine its activities with those of the regular meeting on January 10th, at the Hotel Pennsylvania, at which time clinics will be given on "The Use of Cotton and Gauze" and "The Care of Impression Trays." The members of the CLINIC CLUB PLEASE NOTE that there will be no other meeting held in January.

FEBRUARY MEETING

There will be no February meeting at the Hotel Pennsylvania. The meeting will be a combined meeting with our sister

society, the Dental Assistants' Study Club of Brooklyn, Friday, February 3rd, 8 P. M. SHARP., 62 Hanson Place.

PLEASE make a note of this and arrange to be present. "Noblesse Oblige."

CLASSES

A class on "General Anesthesia will be held on Friday, January 6th, at 7:45 P. M., at the rooms of the Fawcett & Fawcett Dental Supply Company, 435 Fulton Street, Brooklyn. Entrance on Jay Street. Via the subways, get off at Borough Hall Stations.—Dr. B. B. Gilmore will be the instructor.

If you have not signed for this class, get in touch immediately with Mrs. Ethel Pollack, 1825 Harrison Ave., New York City.

DUES

Dues are due, so says our Treasurer, Fannie Cohen, who will accept payments on account until liquidated. Please get in touch with her.—The magazine comes to you as included in your dues, surely you do not want it discontinued. It will be, after January, if you have not made a payment.

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Here and There

Robina A. McMurdo, 140 East 80th St., N. Y. C.

American D. A. Assn.

Ninth Annual Meeting, August 7-12, 1933, Syracuse, N. Y. JULIA SCHULTZ, M. CLARK, General Sec'y, 1-4 Scofield Bldg, Minot, North Dakota.

D. A. Assn., State of N. Y.

Fifth Annual Meeting, May 11-13, 1933, Syracuse, N. Y. JULIA SCHULTZ, Gen. Sec'y, 148 E. Water St., Elmira. **Dental Assts. Study Club (Bklyn., N. Y.)**

Meets January 6th, 1933, 8 P.M., 62 Hanson Place, Brooklyn. Clinician, Mr. G. Frick of Fawcett & Fawcett's. Subject, "Selecting Teeth." Regular Meeting, January 20th, 1933, 8 P.M., 62 Hanson Place, Brooklyn. Topic, "Why a Dental Assistant? If So, What Kind?" Speaker, Dr. F. J. Entwistle.

Los Angeles D. A. Assn. (Cal.)

Meets January 13th, 1933, 8 P.M., 1106 S. Broadway, L. A. Five Minute Papers will be read and a "Uniform Styles Show" presented by a leading department store. The Society has arranged that a copy of "The Dental Assistant" will hereafter go with the dues for each member. The Society sends hearty New Year Greetings to all sister societies in the A. D. A. A. BILLIE ROGERS, Sec'y, 204 Security Bank Bldg.

Georgia D. A. Assn.

The First District, Savannah, meets Monday, January 9th, 6 P.M. The A. D. A. A. Clinics will be shown, and the Delegate's Report read. Ruth Spitz, Secretary, Forsyth Apartments, Savannah. The Fifth District, Atlanta, meets January 13th, 1933, 6 P.M., Atlanta Southern Dental College; Speaker, Dr. F. Lammons, on "Assisting with Children," Round Table Discussion on "Present Day Problems." Katherine Moore, Secretary, 478 Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Suite 503.—The Sixth District, Macon, meets January 10th, 1933, 6 P.M. The

A. D. A. A. Clinics will be shown and Delegate's Report read. MARGUERITE GILLELAND, Sec'y, 606 Georgia Casualty Bldg., Macon.

Des Moines D. A. Study Club (Iowa)

Meets Monday, January 9th, 1933. Installation of officers and Round Table Discussion. Guests welcome. SANTINE M. CHIESA, Chmn. of Pub., 808 Bankers Trust Bldg.

Minnesota D. H. and A. Assn.

Twelfth Annual Meeting, February 7-9, 1933, held in conjunction with 50th Anniversary of Minnesota Dental Society, Municipal Auditorium, Minneapolis, Minn. A cordial welcome awaits all dental assistants at Minnesota's Golden Jubilee. IRENE S. ELMGREN, President, 485 Ride Street, St. Paul.

Valley District D. A. Society (Mass.)

Meets January 9th, 1933, 8 P.M. Chamber of Commerce, Springfield. Essayist, Miss Hilda Flemming, R. N., Topic, "Better Business Methods for the Dental Assistant." MARION WEBSTER, President, Hadley Falls Bldg., Holyoke.

Cincinnati D. A. Assn. (Ohio)

This Society is sponsoring a lecture course in "Applied Psychology" under the direction of the University of Cincinnati. Classes held one evening every two weeks. Mrs. Esther G. Uhrbrook, Instructor, is a former Assistant Professor of Psychology of Northwestern University, Chicago. HELENE F. MYERS, Vice-President, 6019 Madison Road, Cincinnati, O.

Erie County D. A. Assn.

Meets January 11th, 1933, 8 P.M., at the Y.W.C.A. Clinician, Miss A. Swanson, R.N. Subject, "First Aid." Papers will be read by Miss Shanahan on "Helpful Hints" and by Miss Hunter on "Chair Assistance." LOUISE WEIBLEN, Secretary, 813 Sassafras Street, Erie, Pa.

